



Center News



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A Newsletter for Federal Child Care Centers

Winter 1999

The GSA nationwide network of child care coordinators

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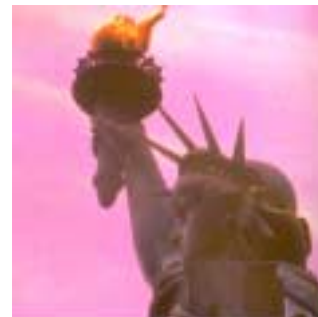
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GSA's 11th Annual Child Care Conference "GSA Child Care 2000: A Vision for the Future"



**Marriott Hotel Times Square
New York, New York
July 27- 29, 2000**



Mark your calendars! GSA's 11th Annual Child Care Conference will be held in New York City this year on July 27-29th. Registration Forms will be mailed in early May to people on the mailing list. Conference information, including registration forms, will be posted on our website <http://www.gsa.gov/pbs/centers/child/child.html>. If you have questions, or would like to get on our mailing list, please contact Sue Dixon at (202) 501-0287. This should be a fantastic Conference. We hope to see you there!



WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD APRIL 9-15, 2000



Each year in April the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation's largest organization of early childhood professionals, sponsors **The Week of the Young Child**. The purpose of this celebration is to call attention to the needs of young children and their families and to support the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs. NAEYC is the organization GSA uses to accredit its child care centers.

Celebrations are organized by NAEYC or its affiliates in many communities across the country. Early childhood programs and families can take part in these celebrations or can celebrate the week through individual activities.

NAEYC has designated April 9-15 as this year's Week; however, since this is a grassroots celebration, local communities may tailor the celebration however they see fit. The central

purpose of the Week is to promote the needs of young children, their families, and the early childhood programs that serve them, no matter how or when it is celebrated.

This year's Week of the Young Child theme is "Early Childhood: Where Our Future Begins."

More detailed information on the Week of the Young Child may be found on NAEYC's website at www.naeyc.org.

This is a good opportunity to market your program. We hope you will do something special for the week of the Young Child!



Mid-Atlantic Region Child Care Center Recognized By Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families

The Little Eagle Child Care Center, located in the Mid-Atlantic Region, has been chosen by the Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families as one of the top ten exemplary early care and education programs in West Virginia. The facility, located in Martinsburg, West Virginia, primarily serves the families of Internal Revenue Service employees working at the IRS Martinsburg Computing Center. The design and physical arrangement of the Child Care Center enhances the ease and ability of caregivers to do their jobs and lends itself to positive interaction, which enhances the Center's ability to deliver a quality program. The facility is a wonderful example of how physical environments can work in support of an organization's mission and contribute to the overall success of an organization.



MORE WEB SITES:

GSA Child Care Program

<http://www.gsa.gov/pbs/centers/child/child.html>

The Foundation Center

<http://www.fdncenter.org>

Early Childhood Research & Practice

ecrp.uiu.edu/index.html

Family Education

www.familyeducation.com



Kevin's

Corner



One thing everyone can agree on: The marvelous, restorative quality of sunlight. As Thomas Jefferson once said, "Light is my almighty physician." If we adults value natural light so much, think what an event it is for children for whom the experience is still so new! Early childhood experts have always intuitively known the effect of light on children, but now evidence is mounting that light actually aids in brain development.

Though great strides have been made in improving the quality of artificial light, the variable, season-related quality of natural light, which connects children so intimately to the natural world which they are in the process of discovering, will always be very difficult to replicate.

And yet, because our centers are usually in "found" space within an existing building, it is often difficult if not impossible to guarantee a location with an ample amount of natural light. We are continuing to explore how to optimize the use of daylight in our centers. For instance, in centers currently under design, GSA is advocating the selective use of light shelves. These simple, inexpensive devices are basically horizontal planes mounted above head height at windows with reflective surfaces directed towards the ceiling. Not only do they project natural light deep into the classrooms, but they substantially lower the

amount of required artificial lighting. In fact, when we consider that 30% of the electric bill in a building goes for lighting, we get an idea of the savings this is – both for the taxpayer and the environment! But for the children, it's the magical quality of the light as it moves across the ceiling during the day that is the real payoff.

Finally, another simple way to increase the effect of the available daylight is to employ light colors with high reflectance, especially on walls and ceilings. While a highly reflective off-white paint may reflect 85% of the light hitting it, a light blue, for instance, may only reflect 60%. The difference has to be made up with the *dreaded* artificial light. This will never be as pleasant and will invariably alter the color rendition. In other words, the light blue you thought you loved at the paint store – you may actually hate in the light of your classroom. In fact, to judge the effect of colors under particular lighting, large samples painted directly on the walls is the only way to judge the true effect of light on color. Also, always ask what the reflectance value is for the paint you will use, and go for a high value to optimize the sunlight effect.

Next time, we will cover some of those improvements in artificial light mentioned earlier!

Recognizing Those Who Care

In concert with child care organizations nationwide, the General Services Administration (GSA) is taking this opportunity to recognize child care employees who provide **direct care to children** in our centers. It takes a very special person to establish strong connections with parents, work with young children and anticipate their needs, support other caregiving personnel, and strive for continued professionalism.

Dr. Donna Hinkle, Department of Education National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education; Ms. Susan Swanhorst, Parent at the Fingerprints Child Development Center; and Dr. Vicky Moss, GSA Child Care Policy Office reviewed nominations from regions and centers and identified individuals for their work in GSA centers. As Week of the Young Child (April 9 – 15, 2000) and Provider Appreciation Day (May 12, 2000) approach, we are proud to feature these folks who are making a significant difference for young children and their families!

Delicia Whitby. Toddler Lead Teacher, Federal Trade Commission Child Care Center in Washington, D.C. She makes her classroom a happy and exciting place for the children in her care, reaches out to mentor co-workers earning Child Development Associate certificates or seeking improved teaching methods, and increases her own level of professionalism with new credentials.

Theresa Trujillo. Toddler Teacher at Clever Kids Learning Center in Denver Colorado. She takes true ownership in her program from superb interactions with children to going the extra mile by mending clothing for the single dads using the center or quickly stitching up a cot sheet! Clearly she views her responsibilities as more than the job description reflects!

Jackie Phillips. Teacher of children ages 2 ½ to 6 years, Cradle to Crayons

Community Child Care Options in Olympia, Washington. She connects with children so that teaching and playing with them is just a natural act. She continues to improve her own professionalism through course work and by visiting other centers for ideas to integrate in her own center setting.

Mylissa Nelson. Teacher of two-year-olds, Little Eagle Child Care Center in Kearneysville, West Virginia. She treats children as individuals and maximizes the time she has with them. She is the recipient of the 1999 LECCC Excellence in Education award, and a certified trainer and WV state representative for the Infant to Three Inclusion Program.

Lawanda Turner. Teacher for Infants, Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center in Atlanta, Georgia. She observes individual infants closely in her room and encourages them to reach new milestones, nurturing the bond with them long after they move to another age group. She is accessible to parents and readily develops a trusting relationship with them.

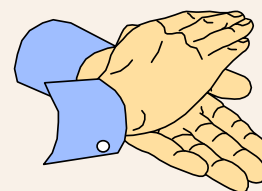
Nelia Smith. Teacher of Young Toddlers, 601 Federal Complex Child Care Center, Kansas City, MO. In addition to classroom responsibilities, Nelia willingly takes on extra duties and is ready to help out every day. She takes great pride in the children in her care and is respected and valued by all her co-workers who feel she truly merits this recognition.

Kathleen Bradley. Preschool Teacher at Future Stars in Austin, Texas. She is an exceptional teacher of young children, adept at handling surprise situations! While working fulltime, she completed the CDA credential and Associates degree in child development, and is now organizing a parent group for families.

Ayumi Olmstead. Preschool Teacher, Stars & Stripes Learning Station in Battlecreek, Michigan. She teaches activities in Japanese, Spanish and French languages, planning her learning experiences at children's level of development. No job is too small for her, from organizing the staff lounge to rearranging the supply closet!

Lisa McBride. Preschool Assistant Teacher, Newark Federal Child Development Center, NJ. As an employee who works until center closing at 6:00 p.m., she is there for the last child to leave. As a result, her hours have sometimes extended as much as two hours past expected shift end. Despite this, she continues to ensure departures are warm and nurturing to all parties involved.

They are recognized for quality work with children, relationships with families, support of co-workers, commitment to early childhood, continued professional growth, and willingness to go the extra mile. These are some truly special people and we are proud they are sharing their talents with children and families enrolled in GSA child development centers. We encourage organizations at the local level to pass along kudos to these and other outstanding individuals who go above and beyond to positively impact on children, families and center life.



Of the GSA centers eligible for NAEYC accreditation, 83% are accredited

Congratulations to the following centers on their recent accreditations: Fed Kids Child Care Center, New York City, NY; Concorde School, Houston TX; Creative Child Development Center (HUD), Washington DC; Childtime, Cincinnati, OH; Harry Pregerson Child Care Center, Los Angeles, CA; Children's Holladay Center, Portland, Oregon.

Congratulations to the following centers on their recent re-accreditation: Childtime Children's Center of Columbia, SC.; CCC Learning Center, Custom House, Chicago Illinois.

Legislative Update

The implementing regulations for Public Law 106-58, which allows Federal agencies to use appropriated funds to improve the affordability of child care for their lower income employees, is in the final review process. We expect the regulations to be issued in March 2000. At that time agencies can begin the process of subsidizing their lower graded employees child care costs. The Office of Personnel Management has written a manual with different models for establishing tuition assistance guidelines to assist agencies with this process. This manual is available on the OPM web site www.opm.gov under the section "what's new".

In related good news, the President has included in his 2001 budget a provision for extending this authority beyond fiscal year 2000.

Also, the IRS, Department of Energy, HHS, OPM and GSA are agencies who have identified themselves as going to participate in the subsidy program.



1999 Holiday Festivities Castle Kids, New Orleans, Louisiana



Castle Kids Child Development Center celebrated their 2nd Annual Holiday Festivities, as the Pre-K class put on their rendition of an old time classic, "Twas the Night Before Christmas". The production was held on Friday, December 17th, 1999, and their performance was nothing less than outstanding!

Castle Kids is a newly opened facility, and it celebrated its 1st year anniversary in mid September of '99. The center is located on the site of the Army Corps of Engineers, and the facility is managed by the YMCA of Greater New Orleans. The center is full and maintains a waiting list of 95 prospective students. Our open door policy allows visitors at any time to stop in and gain a better understanding of our center and its unique program.

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Contributions and Comments on
Center News are welcome and
encouraged.